

to help me build that kind of bridge to the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:34 p.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to former mayor of New York City, David Dinkins, and Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado.

Remarks on Departure for Iowa and an Exchange With Reporters

September 15, 1996

Bosnia

The President. Good morning. A year ago Bosnia was racked by the bloodiest war in Europe since World War II. Yesterday Bosnians went to the polls in peace to cast their votes for their future. The road ahead will be heard, but yesterday was a remarkable step forward. The Bosnian people, the international community, and the American people should be proud.

Our observer delegation, led by Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, reports that the elections generally were orderly and calm. Close to 70 percent of Bosnia's registered voters cast a ballot freely at one of 4,400 polling places all across the country. And nearly 80 percent of the registered refugees abroad voted by absentee ballot.

I want to thank IFOR, the international police task force, and the more than 1,200 international election monitors for helping so many Bosnians take part in these elections. By voting yesterday, the Bosnian people gave life to the institutions of national government: a presidency, a parliament, a constitutional court, key government agencies. These institutions can bring the country together instead of driving it apart. Now we have to get them up and running and help the Bosnian people in the hard work of building a unified, democratic, and peaceful Bosnia.

Our commitment to Bosnia does not end with these elections. We will continue to do our part to hold Bosnia's leaders to their commitments and to turn the promise born 9 months ago at Dayton into a reality.

Thank you.

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, there are reports that Iraq has fired more missiles at U.S. planes. Do you know if those reports are true, and if so, do you plan to respond?

The President. I can't confirm that now.

Q. Mr. President, what do you say to criticism by House Speaker Newt Gingrich, especially in light of the confusion with the ground troops, U.S. ground troops, potentially going to Kuwait, now waiting? He says our policy over there makes no sense, that it's a typical muddle.

The President. That's just election year talk by Mr. Gingrich.

Q. Mr. President, is Kuwait at all delaying or not approving the deployment of U.S. ground troops?

The President. No, we have no information to that effect. I think that what I would do is just let the orderly processes that are always followed in these kinds of cases go forward. I think that there is no problem here, based on what I know. I think that what happened was that the decision on the movements that we had made actually became public before we had done our regular consultation and the Kuwaitis had done their regular review. As far as I know, there is nothing irregular or troubling here.

Q. Mr. President, what do you think of Senator Nunn saying that Saddam is stronger now, and are you all set to retaliate again if something happens?

The President. Well, I believe that he's in better shape than he was the day after the Gulf war in 1991, but strategically, I do not believe he is stronger because of the expansion of the no-fly zone. I think the expansion of the no-fly zone was designed to do one thing and one thing only: to increase our capacity to monitor and to limit his ability to threaten his neighbors in light of his increased aggressiveness. And I think that we will achieve that and I think we are achieving that and that was exactly what we set out to achieve.

But he was not taken out of office in the Gulf war. He has managed to survive, and he is still in power. But the important thing for the United States is that he not be able to threaten his neighbors and to do what was done in 1991 in the Gulf war. We don't want

to have to do that all over again, and that's what we're trying to avoid. And I believe we have taken an appropriate step to do that.

Q. Is there a breakdown in communications between you and Capitol Hill? They act like they don't know what's going on.

The President. Well, I can't comment on that. We've done our best to keep them very carefully informed, and I expect to have some personal consultations in the next few days, and we'll see about that. But I believe we did the right thing, and I think it was the appropriate course. And I will do everything I can to answer whatever questions any Member of Congress has.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks at a Rally for Senator Tom Harkin in Indianola, Iowa *September 15, 1996*

The President. Thank you very much. It's good to be back. How many of you were here 4 years ago? [Applause] How many of you weren't here 4 years ago? [Applause] Four years from now, we're going to have to rent the next farm to have this. Let's keep going.

Let me say to all of you how very happy I am to be here. I'm sorry I wasn't here from the beginning. I'm sorry I missed Tom Arnold and my buddy Jerry Jeff Walker. Maybe they'll play a little on the way out while I'm shaking hands. But I'm glad they came here and thank them both for being here.

I want to thank those who are here to support us: Attorney General Tom Miller, Agriculture Secretary Dale Cochran. Mike Peterson gave a heck of a speech up here a few minutes ago. He'll be a good candidate someday. I want to thank Mayor Kelly of Indianola, Mayor Davis of Des Moines.

I want to thank Tom and Ruth and Jenny and Amy for serving the State of Iowa. I want you to know that Ruth Harkin has played a major role in the efforts that our administration have made to sell more American products around the world and get more American investment and have fair as well as free trade. And I thank her. You should all be

very proud of her for the work she did as head of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

I thank Senator Harkin for what he said but, more importantly, for what he has done and been to the people of Iowa, to the people of the United States, and to the President. He has been nothing short of magnificent in his service to our country and to this State in the last 4 years since I've been in Washington.

I can't tell you all the times that I have turned to Tom Harkin in the last 4 years when things were on the line for America, when we had to pass an economic plan to get the deficit down, to get the interest rates down, to get the economy going again. And Iowa is a strong two-party State; we're going to try to change that a little this time. And our friends in the other party were saying, "Oh, the President's economic plan is just awful. It will increase the deficit; it will bankrupt the economy; it will hurt people." Every single one of them to the person lined up and said no. It's unfortunate for them because 4 years later we got 10½ million new jobs, lower interest rates, record numbers of small businesses, American exports at an all-time high, businesses owned by women and minorities at an all-time high. They all said no, but Tom Harkin said yes. We got a 7½-year low in our unemployment rate. Thank you, Tom Harkin, for making the difference and for fighting for us.

Then there was the family and medical leave law. They all said—their nominee is still saying, "It was a terrible mistake, that law, bad for business. Glad he led the fight against it." We just had a bipartisan survey about the family and medical leave law, and the 12 million American families that got to take a little time off from work when a baby was born or a parent was sick without losing their jobs, they said it didn't hurt. And I say one of the biggest challenges you have today, every one of you, is to create a country in which families can succeed at home and at work. It's good for the economy to help people be good parents, good children, good family members. Thank goodness we had Tom Harkin to fight the good fight.

We said the crime rate was too high in America and we needed to do something to